

What is claimed is:

1. A remote monitoring or refereeing system for amusement machines comprising:

an amusement machine, comprising:

5 play components and

means to capture multimedia information related to the conduct of play and data on the performance of players using the amusement machines;

means for transmitting the multimedia information and the data captured from the machines to a network, and

10 at least one refereeing center for compiling the multimedia information and the data wherein the refereeing center is located in the network and enables refereeing, either nearly instantaneously or with a time delay, of the conduct of play or performance of players using the amusement machines.

15 2. The system of claim 1 wherein the means to capture multimedia information further comprises:

at least one imaging device to capture an in motion image of game or player performance;

a microphone and a speaker for audio communication, and

20 the means for transmitting the multimedia information and the data further comprises a processor to manage, store and transmit the multimedia information and the data captured.

3. The system according to claim 1, wherein the amusement machines further comprise computer-assisted refereeing devices.

25 4. The system according to claim 3, wherein said computer-assisted refereeing devices further comprise:

a source of visible light to delimiting a particular player or game boundary,

and wherein the at least one imaging device captures an image of the particular player or game boundary and an image recognition system detects if the conditions related to the particular player or game boundary are satisfied.

5           5.       The system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one refereeing center comprises: monitors to monitor the state of development of the games being conducted on the amusement machines.

10           6.       The system according to claim 1, wherein the amusement machines further comprise a monitor to display the multimedia information and data and additional information from the machine and/or the network, wherein the additional information may comprise direct or prerecorded images, text, or computer generated media.

7.       The system according to claim 4, wherein the source of visible light is a laser.

8.       The system according to claim 5, wherein the monitors have flat screens.

15           9.       The system according to claim 6, wherein a screen of the monitor is positioned in an upper part of the amusement machine, protruding with respect to a front principal plane of the amusement machine with a certain gradient with respect to a vertical plane.

10.      A remote monitoring or refereeing method for amusement machines, to be used in a system comprising:

20           a plurality of amusement machines communicating over a network and comprising: play components, means for capturing data on performance of the players at the machines and image capturing means;

          means for transmitting the data captured from the machines to the communication network; and

25           one or more refereeing centers for evaluating the data transmitted over the network and to enable refereeing of play substantially instantaneously or with a time delay;

          the method comprising:

capturing, if the player complies with certain conditions of play during the game play, a result of a portion of play and an image of the area of play and of the player;

5 transmitting the result and the image to the one or more refereeing centers to be evaluated by a referee;

enabling a decision by the referee as to whether the portion of play has been performed without infringing a rule of play;

transmitting the decision via the network to corresponding amusement machines according to the competition refereed; and

10 displaying the decision on the corresponding amusement machines according to the competition refereed.

11. The method, according to claim 10, wherein performance of players is refereed in real time.

12. The method according to claim 10, wherein the decision by a referee occurs in real time in a competition between two players who are in different locations.

13. The method according to claim 10, wherein the decision by a referee occurs with a time delay.

14. The method according to claim 10, wherein the decision by a referee is based on the result and the image transmitted to the one or more refereeing centers.

20 15. The method according to claim 9, wherein a player, may transmit a signal indicating an objection to a certain portion of play, either the player's own play or another player's play, to the one or more refereeing centers, and the player's are able to communicate using visual and verbal means, and wherein the referee makes a final ruling on objection to the certain portion of play.

25 16. The method according to claim 15, wherein the final ruling updates is transmitted to and displayed on the corresponding amusement machines.

17. The method according to claim 10, wherein the referee is a human operator assisted by electronic devices.